

2012 CORPORATION COUNSEL REPORT



Philip C. Ristow, Corporation Counsel
E. Scott Scheibel, Asst. Corporation Counsel
Connie Freeberg, Paralegal II (Confidential)/County Board Reporter

Services Provided & Responsibilities

The Corporation Counsel is legal advisor to the County Board, the County Administrator, all County Board committees, commissions and boards, and all department heads. The following are some of the Corporation Counsel's specific areas of responsibility:

- Attend all meetings of the County Board and render legal advice and opinions to the County Board and various committees
 - Preparation of bid requirements for County's Official Newspaper
 - Preparation and publication of County Board minutes and annual minute books
- Prepare resolutions, ordinances, and reports as requested by County Board members or County Administrator
 - Prepared the majority of resolutions and ordinances for all of the Board's actions in 2012, including in most cases, the background work leading to the decisions
- Receive and answer requests for opinions and advice concerning powers and duties from County officers and employees
- Assist Planning & Zoning Department in the enforcement of zoning and sanitation laws, including the trial of contested matters
 - Prosecuted 6 zoning citations & 1 Health Department citation
- Acquire highway right of way through voluntary purchase or condemnation
- Assist in the preparation of bids, contracts and administration of various public work projects or for services rendered to the County
 - Numerous contracts for Fair week
 - Courthouse parking lot/underground facility ceiling repair (Sheriff's Office)
 - Lake Mills satellite shop land purchase
 - Countryside Home purchase
- Assist the County Administrator in labor negotiations, grievances and other personnel matters
 - Various personnel issues, problems and grievances
- Handle claims and suits against the County, including assisting the County's liability insurance carriers in the defense of claims and suits

- Participate as the County's representative at Wisconsin Municipal Mutual Insurance Company meetings offsite
- Collect delinquent taxes and foreclosure of real estate tax liens.
 - In rem 2012, List 1: Judgment on 12 parcels; 6 parcels will be up for sale in 2013 and 6 parcels will be kept by the County
 - In rem 2012, List 2: Judgment on 5 parcels; all sold to the Village of Johnson Creek which will make about \$635,000 available for use in the 2014 budget
- Collect unpaid service charges for various County departments
- Legal counsel for County in mental commitments and guardianship proceedings
 - 125 mental commitments
 - 42 extension of mental commitments
 - 49 guardianships and/or protective placements
- Appearances in private CHIPS cases
- Provide legal services to the Child Support office
- When authorized and directed by the County Administrator, act as Assistant County Administrator and provide direct supervision over certain county department heads; make necessary decisions in the County Administrator's absence
- Miscellaneous
 - Election recounts and open records requests regarding election results
 - Assist with redrafting of Personnel Ordinance
 - Assist Planning & Zoning in the revision of the Zoning Ordinance
 - Negotiate tower issues for Sheriff's Office
 - Lea conservation easement

2013 Goals

- Tax foreclosure on additional delinquent properties
- Finish codification of ordinances and policies
- Efficiently address the numerous unknown issues that will arise in 2013, particularly related to the ongoing personnel and financial challenges resulting from new state limits
- Assist regarding legal issues on the upcoming issues:
 - 1st floor bathrooms near lobby
 - Security addition
 - Lake Mills satellite shop
 - Old Countryside Home possible purchase
 - New Highway Shop
 - Radio tower negotiations for Sheriff's Office
 - Neupert conservation easement